

November 13, 2000

Docket No. 05000309
License No. DPR-36

Michael Meisner
President
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company
321 Old Ferry Road
Wiscasset, ME 04578-4922

SUBJECT: INTEGRATED INSPECTION NO. 05000309/2000003

Dear Mr. Meisner:

On October 6, 2000, the NRC completed an inspection at your Maine Yankee reactor facility of activities authorized by the above listed NRC license. The findings of the inspection were discussed with Messrs. William Odell, George Zinke, and others by telephone on November 13, 2000. The enclosed report presents the results of this inspection.

Your operations, maintenance, engineering, and plant support programs were inspected during this three-month inspection period. The inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observations by the inspectors. The programs were considered to be appropriately implemented and no violations of NRC requirements were cited.

During this inspection period, we conducted the first review of your final status survey program for decommissioning. Although your staff had a good understanding of the MARRSIM methodology, we did identify opportunities for improvement and opened three inspection follow-up items.

In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules and Practices," Part 2, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR) and will be accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html>. No reply to this letter is required.

Michael Meisner

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Your cooperation with us is appreciated.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Ronald R. Bellamy, Chief
Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Enclosure:
Inspection Report No. 05000309/2000003

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Michael Meisner

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REGION I

INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection No. 05000309/20000003

Docket No. 05000309

License No. DPR-36

Licensee: Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company

Location: 321 Old Ferry Road
Wiscasset, ME 04578-4922

Inspection Dates: July 8, 2000 - October 6, 2000

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Approved By: Ronald R. Bellamy, Chief D&LB,
Division of Nuclear Material Safety, NRC Region I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company NRC Inspection Report No. 05000309/2000-003

This integrated inspection included aspects of licensee operations, maintenance, engineering, and plant support programs. The report covers a three-month period of announced inspections by two regional inspectors, two NRC contractors, and one headquarters inspector.

Operations

Maine Yankee effectively implemented a program to protect safety related systems against cold weather. (Section O1.1)

Maintenance

Maintenance and surveillances for structures, systems and components were being conducted in a manner that resulted in the safe storage of spent fuel and proper operation of radiation monitoring equipment. (Section M1.1)

Engineering

Maine Yankee's geo-technical investigation for the selected site for the ISFSI storage pad was found to be complete, sufficiently detailed, and supported by empirical results based on a comprehensive soil boring program. The peripheral drainage surrounding the selected site was found adequate and the supporting calculations were acceptable. The design of the storage pad appeared to be acceptable and was supported by a detailed soil structure interaction analysis. (Section E1.1)

Maine Yankee established, maintained, and implemented adequate programs for performing safety reviews and design changes and modifications. (Section E1.2)

Plant Support

The first NRC/ORISE inspection of the final status survey program revealed that Maine Yankee staff had a good understanding of the MARSSIM methodology. However, opportunities for improvement were identified and Maine Yankee's staff is working toward improving the final status survey program. Three inspection follow-up items were identified for further NRC review. (Section R1.1)

Maine Yankee took prompt corrective actions in response to the identification that a contaminated sea-land container had been improperly released from the restricted area. Maine Yankee initiated a detailed investigation to identify root causes, to evaluate program weaknesses, and to establish appropriate corrective actions to prevent recurrence. (R1.2)

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REPORT DETAILS

Summary of Facility Activities

The plant was maintained in a permanently shutdown condition during this inspection period. The spent fuel remained in storage in the spent fuel pool. Construction of the independent spent fuel storage installation began.

I. Operations

O1 Conduct of Operations

O1.1 Cold Weather Preparations

a. Inspection Scope (71714)

A review was performed to determine if Maine Yankee has implemented a program to protect safety-related systems against cold weather. Information was gathered by a review of procedures, Maine Yankee "Cold Weather Inspection Team" issues for 1999, condition reports for cold weather issues; walkdowns of the fuel storage and primary auxiliary buildings (PABs); and interviews with cognizant personnel.

b. Observations and Findings

Maine Yankee's guidance for the protection of safety related systems is contained primarily in procedures 0-06-12 "Cold Weather Preparations," 1-107-3 "Heating & Ventilation," and 1-12-12: "SFPI Heating & Ventilation." Interviews with the Operations Manager indicated that prior to the start of cold weather, a Cold Weather Preparations team is assembled to tour the plant to identify any vulnerabilities with respect to cold weather. The Operations Manager stated that the 2000 Cold Weather Preparations team would be assembled and all inspection activities would be completed prior to the end of October 2000. The inspector reviewed a list of issues identified by the 1999 Cold Weather Preparations team and noted that significant issues were entered into the corrective action system and corrective actions had been taken. For example, the Cold Weather Preparations team identified that sections of a fire main were located in several unheated areas of the PAB. The inspector reviewed CR-00-01, "Underground Fire Main to PAB in Non Heated Area" and noted that corrective actions included installation of heat-tracing on portions of the fire main piping and the initiation of a review of other fire protection piping. The licensee's program for cold weather preparations appeared to be adequate.

c. Conclusion

Maine Yankee effectively implemented a program to protect safety-related systems against cold weather.

II. Maintenance

M1 Conduct of Maintenance

M1.1 Maintenance and Surveillances

a. Inspection Scope (62801)

Inspectors reviewed maintenance practices for structures, systems and components (SSCs) that ensure safe storage of spent fuel and proper operation of radiation monitoring and effluent equipment. Information was gathered by a review of procedures, operator logs, schedules and records for preventive maintenance (PM) and surveillances, through interviews with cognizant personnel, and in-plant inspections of the spent fuel pool (SFP) and the stack off-gas monitor.

b. Observations & Findings

Licensee procedures outlined programs for PM and surveillances for SSCs important to safety. Operations Department routine schedules, Operator logs, and PM and surveillance data sheets showed that PM and surveillances were routinely scheduled and performed. Several opportunities were identified for improving procedures by including "pre-calculated" acceptance criteria. Overall maintenance and surveillance practices were adequate.

c. Conclusion

Maintenance and surveillances for SSCs were being conducted in a manner that results in the safe storage of spent fuel and proper operation of radiation monitoring equipment.

III. Engineering

E1 Conduct of Engineering

E1.1 Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

a. Inspection Scope (60851)

This inspection included a detailed review of the licensee's geotechnical investigation that characterized the soil and rock condition beneath the selected site for the Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI). Under the scope of this inspection, key aspects of the pad design were reviewed. Technical details of the supporting calculation for the selected site for the storage pad were discussed. The inspector made several direct observations of geotechnical activities involving soil testing and soil compaction of the proposed site for the pad.

b. Findings and Observations

As part of the decommissioning and dismantlement of Maine Yankee, the spent fuel pool (SFP) and its SSCs were isolated from the remainder of the MY facility, creating the spent fuel pool island (SFPI). The SFPI maintains the capability to safely store spent fuel in a wet condition while allowing decommissioning activities to proceed in other areas of the plant. MY plans to transition from wet fuel storage to dry storage by off-loading the SFP contents into dry storage casks (DSCs). The DSCs will be loaded into vertical concrete casks (VCCs), which will be stored at the ISFSI. The ISFSI site will consist of a protected area that will contain sixteen concrete storage pads. Each pad is capable of supporting four VCCs.

The inspector reviewed documents and calculations regarding the design of the storage pad, walked down the ISFSI site, and conducted several discussions with MY Engineering personnel. The inspector verified that MY completed a geotechnical investigation that characterized the soil and rock condition beneath the selected site of the ISFSI. This geotechnical investigation was based on empirical data collected through comprehensive soil borings at ten preselected locations. The inspector noted that although the water table is about six feet below the ground surface, the soil beneath the pad provided an adequate media for bearing the load of the fully-loaded pad to the bedrock. In addition, because of the cohesive nature of the clay and dense nature of the thin underlying sand, dynamic settlements and liquefaction due to a postulated design earthquake were not expected.

The inspector verified that groundwater will be kept away from the base of the pad by a drainage system installed along the perimeter of the protected area. The inspector reviewed calculation 08196.16G(B)-10-1, Revision 1. This calculation estimated the amount of groundwater entering the sub-drainage system for the purpose of sizing the perforated drainage pipe. The inspector found the calculation to be adequate. The inspector also reviewed portions of the calculation to size the rebar for the pad and the key aspects of the soil structure interaction analysis.

c. Conclusion

The licensee's geotechnical investigation for the selected site for the ISFSI storage pad was complete, sufficiently detailed, and supported by empirical results based on a comprehensive soil boring program. The peripheral drainage surrounding the selected site was found to be adequate and the supporting calculations were acceptable. The design of the storage pad appeared to be acceptable and was supported by a detailed soil structure interaction analysis.

E1.2 Safety Reviews, Design Changes and Modifications

a. Inspection Scope (37801)

A review was performed of licensee practices for performing safety reviews and design changes and modifications. Information was gathered by a review of procedural guidance, design changes, technical evaluations, 10 CFR 50.59 reviews, training records, and through discussions with cognizant personnel.

b. Observations and Findings

Procedural guidance was thorough and detailed and appropriately addressed the potential for unreviewed safety questions and potential changes to technical specifications. The inspector reviewed selected design change packages. Based on this review, design changes appeared to be effectively conducted, managed, and controlled. Technical evaluations (TE) No. 012-00 "Reactor Vessel Segmentation" and TE No. 014-00, "Refueling Water Cavity Discharge" showed evidence of detailed planning. Training lesson plans and training records showed that staff personnel responsible for performing 10 CFR 50.59 evaluations had attended appropriate training.

c. Conclusion

Licensee staff established, maintained, and implemented adequate programs for performing safety reviews and design changes and modifications.

IV. Plant Support

R1 Radiation Protection & Chemistry (RP&C) Controls

R1.1 Inspection of Final Status Survey Program

NRC/ORISE performed the first of several planned "in-process" inspections to assess the development and adequacy of the MY final status survey (FSS) program described in the License Termination Plan (LTP), dated January 13, 2000, and to provide feedback early in the decommissioning process. The FSS program was still under development and the licensee was performing radiological surveys to justify the release of the low-level waste building (LLWB) and the north contractor parking lot for planned construction of the ISFSI. Licensee staff emphasized, at the time of the inspection, that the final site release criteria had not been formally established, the FSS program was still under development, and the radiological surveys performed in the LLWB and contractor parking lot were intended to justify their release for construction of the ISFSI, and were not part of the formal FSS program.

a. Inspection Scope (83801)

Areas of the FSS program reviewed included the licensee's identification of radiological contaminants, development of derived concentration guideline levels (DCGLs), area classifications, FSS procedures and instrumentation, analytical procedures, QA/QC practices, and data management. Information was gathered through review of historical records, selected sections in the LTP, FSS procedures, radiological survey data packages, technical evaluations relevant to the FSS, area classifications, radiological instrumentation, and interviews with cognizant personnel. Confirmatory measurements were not performed during this initial program inspection.

b. Observations

Based on discussion and direct observation, licensee staff exhibited a good understanding of FSS procedures, analytical techniques and calculational methods. The following observations are provided for consideration by the licensee.

Identification of Contaminants and DCGLs

- O1 The FSS program protocol for directing when alpha measurements should be performed was not clearly defined and the program did not provide sufficient justification for not performing alpha measurements during FSS. Licensee staff reported that the decision to not perform direct alpha radiation measurements was based on site characterization data which showed that the majority of beta-gamma/alpha ratios at the facility were on the order of 20,000:1. However, based on discussions with licensee representatives, some locations within the plant exhibited lower beta-gamma/alpha ratios (2,000:1), which indicated that alpha contamination is a larger contributor to the total contamination in these areas. **An inspection follow-up item (IFI) will be opened to evaluate licensee protocols for the performance of alpha measurements during FSS. (IFI 05000309/2000-003-01)**
- O2 Uranium-238 (U-238), U-235, and U-234 were identified as potential contaminants in soil. However, the concentrations reported (0.01 pCi/g for each nuclide) were less than typical background concentrations. Either the reported concentrations of uranium were incorrect or uranium is not a potential contaminant.
- O3 Neptunium-237 (Np-237) was listed as the third highest dose contributor in the calculated dose model. The contribution of Np-237 appears to be inappropriate because Np-237 was not detected and the value used for Np-237 was the minimum detectable concentration.

Area Classification

- O4 An internal memorandum entitled "Initial Area & Structure Classification," dated June 10, 1999, provided specific guidance for classifying survey areas/units as Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3 areas. Some of the criteria that distinguish a Class 2 area from a Class 3 area overlapped.
- O5 If reduced site release criteria are adopted and result in revised DCGLs, some areas identified in the LTP may need to be reclassified. These areas include: B01900 (Bailey House), A1400 (Personnel Hatch), D0400 (Sanitary Waste System), and D3300 (Turbine Hall Sumps).
- O6 The LLWB was classified as a Class I area requiring a 100% scanning coverage of surfaces in the survey units. The historical site assessment showed no history of loose contamination in the building and all surveys of floor and concrete surfaces showed no indications of contamination. The upper walls and ceiling of the LLWB do not appear to warrant classification as a Class 1 area.

Final Status Surveys and Instrumentation

- O7 Licensee staff reported that when using the Eberline 600/SPA-3 detector combination for performing scanning surveys of soil, the typical background readings were approximately 10,000 cpm. Because the audible response indicator on the E-600 reaches a plateau at 4,500 cpm on the X1 scale, the surveyor is required to switch the audible response setting to the X10 response setting, which reduces the audible click response by a factor of ten, and has the net effect of increasing the scan minimum detectable count (MDC). **An Inspection Follow-up Item (IFI) will be opened to evaluate the licensee's use of instrument scan MDCs. (IFI 05000309/2000-003-02)**
- O8 Review of the licensee's Technical Evaluation 99-025 "Instrument Efficiency" revealed several discrepancies regarding instrument and source efficiencies for gas-flow proportional detectors. They appear as follows:

Gas Flow Proportional Detector Efficiency When Monitoring Tc-99	Industry Experience	Maine Yankee
ϵ_i	0.40*	0.19
ϵ_s	0.25**	0.70

ϵ_i = Detector Intrinsic Efficiency

ϵ_s = Source Efficiency

* Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education

** International Standard Organization Report No. 7503

An inspection follow-up item (IFI) will be opened to evaluate the determination of instrument efficiency for gas flow proportional detectors (05000309/2000-003-03)

- O9 The Geiger-Mueller (GM) "pancake" detector may not have a sufficient minimum detectable count to detect contamination if DCGLs are reduced to meet a revised site release criteria.
- O10 Procedure PMP 6.7.1, "Final Status Survey Procedures for Structures and Soils," Section 6.9 indicates that the surveyor may elect to disable the audible response after consulting with their supervisor. Disabling the instruments audible response output represents a overall reduction in the ability of a surveyor to detect contamination.
- O11 The licensee identified 14 specific background reference materials, but only 10 static measurements were obtained from each reference area. The Wilcoxon Rank Sum statistical test requires a minimum of 14 measurements per reference area (based on the licensee's assumptions of the DCGL, lower boundary of the grey region (LBGR), relative shift, and decision errors).
- O12 Procedure PMP 6.7, "Final Status Survey Program," section 6.2.2.b, Table 2, appears to allow Class 2 areas to contain significant contamination without performing extensive scanning surveys.

c. Conclusions

The first NRC/ORISE inspection of the final status survey program revealed that Maine Yankee staff had a good understanding of the MARSSIM methodology. However, opportunities for improvement were identified and the licensee is working toward improving the FSS. Three inspection follow-up items were identified for further NRC review.

R1.2 Improper Release of Sealand Container From the Restricted Area

a. Inspection Scope (83750)

A review was performed of licensee actions taken in response to the September 30, 2000 identification that a sea-land container had been improperly released from the restricted area of the plant, resulting in several personnel contamination events. Information was gathered by a review of draft condition report (CR) 00-270, attendance at a October 4, 2000 briefing by Maine Yankee for the NRC and State of Maine, and through interviews with cognizant personnel.

b. Observations and Findings

On September 30, 2000, an investigation of a personnel contamination event identified contamination present in a sea-land container located outside of the restricted area of the plant. A follow-up investigation revealed that on September 28, 2000, the sea-land container had been improperly released from the restricted area to allow shielding to be welded on the inside of the container in preparation for a radioactive waste shipment. Licensee staff conducted interviews and determined that as many as 14 workers may have been exposed to the contamination. Five of those workers were found to have detectable contamination on their shoes or clothing. The radiation protection manager reported that based on the activity detected on one individual's clothing, the maximum personnel dose associated with this event was estimated to be less than one millirem to the skin of the individual.

Upon identification that the sea-land container was improperly released from the restricted area, Maine Yankee controlled the sea-land container as contaminated; initiated a stop-work order for all jobs requiring health physics support; initiated CR 00-270 which required a full root-cause investigation to be performed; identified and interviewed potentially affected individuals; initiated personnel contamination monitoring surveys for potentially affected individuals; offered and performed radiological surveys of automobiles and homes of potentially affected individuals; initiated radiological surveys of radiologically controlled and non-radiologically controlled areas of the site; identified enhancements necessary to improve procedural guidance, health physics supervisory oversight, and health physics technician training; and established a requirement for all health physics technicians to undergo supplementary written and oral testing. Maine Yankee's Vice President-Decommissioning and the Director of Operations provided briefings of the event to the NRC and representatives of the State of Maine. Maine Yankee issued a press release describing the event. Maine Yankee's Vice President-Decommissioning stated that Maine Yankee would not resume work requiring health physics support until Maine Yankee was confident that appropriate corrective and preventive actions had been taken.

The inspector noted that the sea-land container was improperly released due to a failure to perform a reasonable survey in accordance with 10 CFR 20.1501. However, due to low safety significance and the licensee's prompt and pro-active response, this issue is being treated as a minor violation not subject to formal enforcement action.

c. Conclusion

Maine Yankee took prompt corrective actions in response to the identification that a contaminated sea-land container had been improperly released from the restricted area and initiated a detailed investigation to identify root causes, evaluate program weaknesses, and to establish appropriate preventive actions.

V. Management Meetings

Meetings

X1 Community Advisory Panel (CAP)

On October 19, 2000 representatives from Region I attended the Maine Yankee CAP meeting. NRC staff presented an overview of NRC site inspection activities and findings for the year 2000.

X2 Exit Meeting

The inspectors presented inspection results to members of the licensee staff at the end of each inspection visit during the inspection period. On November 13, 2000 a summary of the inspection findings for the inspection period (July 8 - October 6, 2000) were presented to William Odell, George Zinke and others by telephone. Licensee representatives acknowledged the inspection findings.

PARTIAL LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED

Licensee and Contractor Staff

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G. Zinke, Director-Regulatory Affairs

State of Maine

P. Dostie, Maine Nuclear Safety Inspector
D. Randall, Nuclear Engineering Specialist

INSPECTION PROCEDURES USED

IP 37801: Safety Reviews, Design Changes, and Mods
IP 60851: Design Control of the ISFSI
IP 62801: Maintenance & Surveillances
IP 71714: Cold Weather Preparations
IP 83750: Occupational Radiation Exposure
IP 83801: Inspections of Final Surveys

ITEMS OPENED, CLOSED, AND DISCUSSED

Items Opened:

IFI 05000309/2000-003-01 Evaluation of Alpha Measurements for Final Site Surveys
IFI 05000309/2000-003-02 Evaluation of Scan MDCs When Using Eberline E600/SPA-3
IFI 05000309/2000-003-03 Evaluation of Instrument and Source Efficiencies for Gas Flow Proportional Detectors

Items Closed: None

Items Discussed: None

LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

ϵ_i	Instrument Efficiency
ϵ_s	Source Efficiency
ALARA	As Low As Is Reasonably Achievable
CAP	Community Advisory Panel
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CR	Condition Report
DCGL	Derived Concentration Guideline Levels
DSC	Dry Storage Cask
FSS	Final Status Survey
GM	Geiger-Mueller
IFI	Inspection Follow-Up Item
IP	Inspection Procedure
ISFSI	Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation
LBGR	Lower Boundary of the Grey Region
LLWB	Low Level Waste Building
LTP	License Termination Plan
MDC	Minimum Detectable Count
mrem	millirem
MYAPC	Maine Yankee Atomic Power Station
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
PAB	Primary Auxiliary Building
PDR	Public Document Room
PM	Preventative Maintenance
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
RP&C	Radiological Protection and Chemistry
SFP	Spent Fuel Pool
SFPI	Spent Fuel Pool Island
SSC	Structures Systems & Components
TE	Technical Evaluation
VCC	Vertical Concrete Cask